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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ROME 000644

SIPDIS

AIDAC

FROM U.S. MISSION IN ROME

AMEMBASSY KABUL FOR AMBASSADOR AND USAID DIRECTOR BUCK
STATE FOR A/S PRM DEWEY, U/S LARSON, SA/PAB, PRM/P, EUR/WE,
EUR/NE AND IO/EDA WINNICK
USAID FOR ADMINISTRATOR NATSIOS, AA/DCHA WINTER,
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DAA/DCHA/GRIGSBY, D/DCHA/FFP LANDIS, PPC/DP, PPC/DC
USDA/FAS FOR U/S PENN, MCHAMBLISS AND RTILLSWORTH
GENEVA FOR RMA AND NKYLOH/USAID
BRUSSELS FOR USAID PLERNER
USUN FOR AMBASSADOR NEGROPONTE, CSERWER AND MLUTZ
NSC FOR JDWORKEN
GAO FOR PTHOMAS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [EAGR](#) [AORC](#) [PREF](#) [KUNR](#) [EAGR](#) [AORC](#) [PREF](#) [KUNR](#) [EU](#) [WFP](#) [UN](#) [EU](#) [EAID](#) [WFP](#) [UN](#) [AFGHANISTAN](#)

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF AFGHANISTAN PROTRACTED RELIEF AND
RECOVERY OPERATION BY WFP'S EXECUTIVE BOARD - U.S. DOLLARS
337.5 MILLION

REF: (A) ROME 000589

SUMMARY

1. WFP'S EXECUTIVE BOARD APPROVED ON FEBRUARY 7 THE
AFGHANISTAN PROTRACTED RELIEF AND RECOVERY OPERATION (PRRO)
ENTITLED FOOD ASSISTANCE TO RE-ESTABLISH LIVELIHOODS AND
HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY IN AFGHANISTAN. THE PRRO WILL BE
OPERATIONAL FOR TWO YEARS (APRIL 1, 2003-END MARCH 2005),
COVERING 6.0 MILLION BENEFICIARIES IN YEAR ONE AND 5.27
MILLION IN YEAR TWO. THE TOTAL COST TO WFP IS U.S. DOLLARS
337.5 MILLION, WITH A TOTAL FOOD REQUIREMENT OF 618,989
METRIC TONS. THE CHALLENGE FOR THE NEW PRRO IS SECURITY.
WITHOUT CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT IN THE SECURITY SITUATION
ACROSS THE COUNTRY, WFP WILL BE CONFINED TO ASSISTING
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PRIMARILY BY SAVING LIVES WHEN THE NEEDS NOW ARE FOR
RECOVERY AND RECONSTRUCTION. END SUMMARY.

U.S. INTERVENTION

2. USAID/DAA/DCHA GARRETT GRIGSBY DELIVERED THE U.S.
INTERVENTION TO THE WFP EXECUTIVE BOARD ON FEBRUARY 6 AND
HIGHLIGHTED THE FOLLOWING:

-THE GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN, THE UNITED NATIONS, NON-
GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND AFGHAN COMMUNITIES HAVE BEEN
IMMENSELY INVOLVED IN RESPONDING TO THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS,
ADDRESSING CRITICAL NEEDS. THE FOCUS HAS NOW SHIFTED TO A
MULTIFACETED RESPONSE TO REBUILDING COMMUNITIES, RESPONDING
TO THE MANY COMPONENTS OF FOOD INSECURITY, CREATING JOBS,
IMPROVING EDUCATION AND HEALTH CARE AND EXPANDING SOCIAL
SERVICES;

-SINCE OCTOBER 2001, THE UNITED STATES HAS MADE AVAILABLE
CLOSE TO U.S. DOLLARS 600 MILLION IN HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE
TO AFGHANISTAN, MUCH OF WHICH HAS BEEN TARGETED TO WOMEN AND
CHILDREN. AND WE ARE COMMITTED TO STANDING SHOULDER TO
SHOULDER WITH THE AFGHAN PEOPLE AS THEY REBUILD THEIR
COUNTRY AND GET BACK ON THEIR FEET AGAIN;

-THE UNITED STATES SUPPORTS THE FULL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN
IN THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LIFE OF AFGHANISTAN
AND SEES WFP'S FOOD-FOR-EDUCATION INTERVENTION AS A VITAL
PART OF THE LONG-TERM EFFORT TO ACHIEVE THIS. ON THE ISSUE
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OF FOOD ASSISTANCE FOR TEACHER SALARY SUPPLEMENTS, ARE OTHER
INTERVENTIONS ENVISIONED TO IMPROVE TEACHERS' SALARIES AND
THUS OBIVATE THE NEED FOR FOOD RATIONS AT SOME POINT IN THE
FUTURE?

-THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE THAT BENEFICIARY GROUPS ARE BEING
CONSULTED ON THE FOOD AID ACTIVITIES IMPACTING THEM. THIS
IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT IN FOOD-FOR-WORK OR FOOD-FOR-ASSET
CREATION. THE ROLE OF BENEFICIARIES IN PLANNING AND
IMPLEMENTING FOOD AID SHOULD BE A PROGRAM FIXTURE;

-THE PROPOSED LTSH (LANDSIDE TRANSPORT, STORAGE AND HANDLING) RATE NEEDS TO BE REVIEWED AGAINST ACTUALS AND ADJUSTED AS APPROPRIATE. AS GIVEN, THE FIGURE OF U.S. DOLLARS 126.82/METRIC TON SEEMS DISPROPORTIONATELY HIGH. WE WOULD ALSO LIKE ASSURANCES THAT THE PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED WITH TRUCKING CHARGES IN HERAT IN LATE 2001-EARLY 2002 HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFULLY RESOLVED;

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ACTION SSO-00

INFO LOG-00 AID-00 ANHR-00 EUR-00 E-00 UTED-00 FOE-00
TEDE-00 IO-00 MMP-00 NEA-00 NSCE-00 OIC-02 SS-00
TEST-00 SA-00 FMP-00 PRM-00 SAS-00 /002W
-----377CA0 181040Z /38

P 180952Z FEB 03
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8301
INFO EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY BERN
USDA FAS WASHDC 2544
USEU BRUSSELS 3127
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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-THE U.S. APPRECIATES THE JOINT EFFORTS OF BOTH WFP AND FAO
TO ESTABLISH A COMPREHENSIVE FOOD SECURITY AND INFORMATION
SYSTEM IN AFGHANISTAN IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE MINISTRY OF
AGRICULTURE AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND THE MINISTRY OF
RECONSTRUCTION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT. THE AVAILABILITY OF
TIMELY PREDICTIONS OF FOOD SHORTAGES AND INFORMATION ABOUT
AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES AND THE FOOD SECURITY SITUATION OF
RURAL HOUSEHOLDS WILL GREATLY ASSIST IN IMPROVING FOOD
SECURITY THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY;

-A RECENT USAID-FUNDED ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDS AGAINST SUCH
LOCAL PURCHASES OF WHEAT WITHIN AFGHANISTAN AT THE PRESENT
TIME, ARGUING THAT PURCHASES WOULD NOT PROVIDE A SUSTAINABLE
BENEFIT TO PRODUCERS AND SERVES TO DISRUPT MARKETS;

-ULTIMATELY THE RETURN OF REFUGEES AND ENDING THE
DISPLACEMENT OF THE INTERNALLY DISPLACED WILL DEPEND UPON
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THE EMPLACEMENT OF A UNIFIED AND EFFECTIVE SECURITY
STRUCTURE. THIS WILL REQUIRE CONTINUOUS MONITORING.

13. ON THE MARGINS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD, USDEL HIGHLIGHTED
THE IMPORTANCE OF WFP AREA OFFICES OPPORTUNELY TRANSMITTING
MONTHLY FOOD ALLOTMENTS TO THEIR NGO PARTNERS FOR PLANNING
PURPOSES AND COMMUNICATING ANY ADJUSTMENTS TO THE
BENEFICIARIES. USDEL ALSO STRESSED IMPROVED REPORTING
RELATED TO ACTUAL DISTRIBUTIONS (TONNAGE AND BENEFICIARY
NUMBERS) AS COMPARED WITH PLANNED DISTRIBUTION ALLOCATIONS.

OTHER INTERVENTIONS

14. GERMANY COMMENTED THAT THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT HAS TO DO A BETTER JOB IN ADDRESSING THE ISSUE OF TEACHER WAGES AND PAYMENT OF ADEQUATE SALARIES IN CASH IN LIEU OF KIND. IRAN WAS MOST SUPPORTIVE OF WFP'S EFFORTS IN AFGHANISTAN AND ANNOUNCED THAT THE GOI WAS GRANTING 1,700 SCHOLARSHIPS FOR AFGHAN YOUTHS TO STUDY IN IRAN. BOTH THE AFGHAN DELEGATE AND THE NETHERLANDS WARNED OF THE DANGER THAT FOOD AID (IN MORE THAN MODEST QUANTITIES) CAN DEPRESS PRICES AND LOWER EARNINGS FOR LOCAL FARMERS.

15. THE NETHERLANDS COMMENTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN IS ENCOURAGING CASH-FOR-WORK, BASED ON THE PREMISE THAT AFGHANISTAN HAS REACHED A SITUATION WHERE CASH CAN BUY WHAT PEOPLE NEED AND THAT CASH WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR CASH-FOR-WORK PROGRAMS. THE WFP SECRETARIAT RESPONDED THAT BOTH FOOD-FOR-WORK AND CASH-FOR-WORK HAVE PROVEN EFFECTIVE
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IN ENDING POVERTY AND HELPING COMMUNITIES TO REBUILD LOST ASSETS - AND THAT PERHAPS THE BEST APPROACH IS A MIX OF CASH AND FOOD ADAPTED TO LOCAL NEEDS.

COMMENT

16. WFP'S CURRENT EMERGENCY OPERATION (EMOP), DUE TO END MARCH 31, 2003, IS 83 PERCENT FUNDED (U.S. DOLLARS 240.3 MILLION). TWENTY-THREE DONORS HAVE RESPONDED TO DATE. THIS STRONG MANIFESTATION OF MULTI-DONOR SUPPORT IS, IN THE BOARD'S VIEW, A TELLING ENDORSEMENT THAT WFP HAS PERFORMED EFFECTIVELY. THE CHALLENGE FOR THE NEW PRRO IS SECURITY. WITHOUT CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT IN THE SECURITY SITUATION ACROSS THE COUNTRY, WFP WILL BE CONFINED TO ASSISTING PRIMARILY BY SAVING LIVES WHEN THE NEEDS NOW ARE FOR RECOVERY AND RECONSTRUCTION. HALL

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